

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-14 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 4-6 are amended. The amendments contain no new matter and are fully supported by Applicants' Specification as filed, including original drawings and claims.

The courtesies extended to Applicants' representative by Examiner Tran at the interview held February 20, 2007, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

**I. Allowable Subject Matter**

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 9, 10 and 12 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants further appreciate the indication that claims 4-6, 11, 13 and 14 would be allowable if the objection to these claims is overcome. Because the objection to the claims is overcome as discussed below, claims 4-6, 11, 13 and 14 are also allowable.

**II. All Pending Claims are Patentable**

Claims 4-6, 11, 13 and 14 stand objected to because of informalities. This objection is respectfully traversed by the amendments to claims 4-6, which provide sufficient antecedent basis for "the specific attribute" and "the another attribute" for dependent claims 11, 13 and 14. As acknowledged by the Examiner during the February 20, 2007 interview, this objection is overcome.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,592,304 to Udagawa et al. ("Udagawa"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 is patentable over Udagawa under §102 because Udagawa does not disclose "wherein for an image having a specific attribute of these two images, no image is deleted even in the overlapping area," as claimed. To the contrary, Udagawa discloses "the

mechanism for reading a portion of image data in an overlap manner is provided which acts when image data transmitted from an image reading device is stored to the frame memory and when overlap image data is deleted before image data is stored and image data is transmitted from the frame memory to the image forming device." (See col. 23, lines 40-55.) Thus, according to claim 1, no image is deleted even in the overlapping area, while Udagawa teaches deleting the overlap image data.

Claim 2, 3, 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Udagawa in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,337,406 to Takakura et al. ("Takakura"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

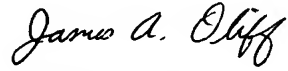
Claims 2 and 7 are patentable over the combination of Udagawa and Takakura under §103 because neither reference discloses "means for forming an image which priority rank is lower, and thereupon, forming an image which priority rank is higher, in the overlapping area," as claimed. More specifically, neither Udagawa nor Takakura disclose forming one image upon another in the overlapping area, and instead disclose deleting one of the overlapping portions. For similar reasons, claims 3 and 8 are also patentable over the combination of Udagawa and Takakura under §103.

### **III. Conclusion**

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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